THE

# ROYAL INTERVIEW;

A

FRAGMENT.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.

THE

# ROYAL INTERVIEW:

A

## *FRAGMENT.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF A LETTER FROM A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN TO A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

THUS SPOKE THE SIRE, AND THUS THE PRINCE REPLY'D.

*Pope's Odyssey.*

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SECOND EDITION.

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# ROYAL INTERVIEW, &c.

K.

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* * * * * * TO ſay the truth, it has been my wiſh and intention not to enter into any converſation with your Royal Highneſs concerning the public conduct of my miniſters, or thoſe who have acted in oppoſition to them during the affecting interval of my government. It was rather an anxious deſire of my own heart to paſs over the chaſm which the lapſe of my underſtanding occaſioned in the public adminiſtration of my kingdom. It appeared to me, that there was no intermediate event which could afford a pleaſing topic of diſcuſſion between you and myſelf: and as it would ill become me to

accompany the bleſſing of my recovery with reſentment to my ſon, whatever his conduct might have been, I became extremely ſolicitous to avoid a retroſpect.—It is enough for me, that, on awaking from my delirium, I find my kingdom uninjured by my infirmity, and exulting in my reſtoration.—But as you ſeem to apprehend ill impreſſions, of ſome kind or other, and declare, that the comfort of your life depends on my hearing from yourſelf the reaſons which governed your conduct during my affliction, I ſhall comply with your requiſition, and liſten to you with a paternal patience. It becomes me, however, previouſly to inform you, that I am well acquainted with every tranſaction of the late important period, and that my opinion is already formed of the meaſures that have been adopted, of the oppoſition that was made to them, and of the perſons who have appeared as principal actors on the occaſion. It may be alſo neceſſary, for a right underſtanding between us, in the buſineſs on which we are about to engage, to obſerve, that while you poſſeſs a full right to plead, I may take the liberty, if I ſee

occa-

occaſion, to condemn.——My kindeſt attention awaits you.

P.

I have every reaſon to apprehend that ſome particular leading individuals, among your Majeſty's ſervants, have repreſented my demeanour during the late unhappy period, as undutiful to yourſelf, unfeeling to your ſituation, and hoſtile to the intereſts of your kingdom.

K.

What convincing reaſons you may poſſeſs whereon to build ſuch an hypotheſis, I am not anxious to enquire, becauſe they are without foundation. Both the Lord Chancellor and the firſt miniſter have, in their communications to me, delivered themſelves with the moſt reſpectful attention to you; and if I could ſuppoſe it poſſible for ſuch wiſe men and faithful ſervants to ſtep beyond the bounds of decorum in their conſultations with me, I ſhould conclude they had done it in the more than earneſt manner with which they recommended me to check any,

and every ſuſpicion of my breaſt with reſpect to the motives that governed the late conduct of your Royal Highneſs. Indeed, I cannot but expreſs my concern, that, on the very threſhold of the buſineſs, you ſhould begin with anſwering an accuſation that has never been made, and charging thoſe men with practiſing againſt you all the injuſtice of miſrepreſentation, who have, on the contrary, acted with a ſpirit of magnanimity, which would do honour to yourſelf. But, not to turn you aſide from the mode of apology, which, perhaps, you are prepared to adopt;—you are at liberty to ſuppoſe that I am perfectly well acquainted with your plans of operation during the time when it was doubtful, whether it would pleaſe God to reſtore me to myſelf and to my people.

P.

I ſhould be truly ſorry, Sir, to ſuſpect where ſuſpicion would be unjuſt; and your royal word is more than ſufficient to remove mine, in the matter before us, from certain of your Majeſty's Miniſters; but as I know

them to be indiſpoſed towards me, I had ſomething like a right to imagine, that, in repreſenting their own ſervices to your Majeſty, they would not fail to miſrepreſent thoſe who oppoſed them.

K.

I cannot anſwer for the ſecret deſigns or thoughts of my Miniſters, any more than for thoſe of my children.—To ſearch into the receſſes of the human heart, and to diſcover what is paſſing there, belongs to that Power alone, before which the monarchs of the world muſt bend;—but as I wiſh to hear your ſentiments on ſomething more than vague opinion, I muſt beg your Royal Highneſs to confine yourſelf to yourſelf; and that you will not do your heart and underſtanding ſo great injuſtice as to look for your juſtification in the miſconduct of others.—But I perceive your embarraſſment:—to relieve you, therefore, as far as may be in my power, from your very unpleaſant ſituation, and to ſave you the trouble, as well as the pain, of ſtating the ſuppoſed charges, which you propoſe to an-

ſwer—I will turn catechiſt, if you pleaſe, and offer ſuch interrogatories as may call forth thoſe replies, which will involve all that you wiſh to ſay to me in the very intereſting ſubject of the preſent conference. I ſhall therefore ſuppoſe, what I truſt you feel yourſelf prepared to prove, that, during the late extraordinary and awful period, you have done every thing which was required, by your duty to me, who am your father—the dignity of your ſtation, which places you next to your Sovereign—and the intereſts of the Empire, which, if you live, will one day be your own. On this idea I ſhall conclude, that, when you had recovered from the ſevere ſhock which muſt have been felt by your mind, on the unexpected nature and poſſible conſequences of my illneſs, you immediately called to your councils and conſolation, ſome of the firſt, the wiſeſt, and the beſt men in this country: or, if you ſhould have thought it more proper, as it might have been at firſt, to reſt the burthen of your mind on one rather than many, I ſhould hope that the diſtinguiſhed individual would be moſt worthy of

your

your confidence, and be eſteemed as ſuch by the nation, as well as yourſelf. May I, therefore, aſk, whom did your Royal Highneſs honour with your earlieſt communications?—

P.

Mr. *Sheridan*.—

K.

Mr. *Sheridan*!—In the name of reaſon, common ſenſe, and honour, what could induce you to place ſuch a confidence, in ſuch a man?—

P.

I am ready, Sir, to declare, without reſerve—That it did not occur to me to make any application to, or have any communication, either aggregately or individually, with your Majeſty's Servants, for none of them poſſeſſed my eſteem; I neither regarded them as private or public men: it was, therefore, I truſt, an honeſt conduct in me, to make application to thoſe whom I eſteemed under both thoſe deſcriptions.

K.

And will your Royal Highneſs tell me, with a grave countenance, that Mr. *Sheridan*, either as a private or a public man, is worthy ſuch a mark of your regard?—As a private man, what are his virtues?—As a public man, what has he done for his country?—What is his character?—Where is his property?—Deſcribe to me, if you pleaſe, the tenor of his life?—To what unaccountable combination of circumſtances does he owe his elevation to your favour? Is it becauſe he is an eloquent ſpeaker, and a great wit?—becauſe he has delivered brilliant ſpeeches, and written excellent comedies?—That the Heir Apparent of the firſt empire in the world, in a ſituation of the greateſt public calamity, ſhould make ſuch a man the repoſitory of his ſecret thoughts, is not to be reconciled to any wiſe or honourable principles of human conduct. If you felt it to be right, in the firſt moment, as it were, of my viſitation, to adopt the party that had ſo violently oppoſed the meaſures of my government, was there no man of patrician rank,

rank, or perſonal conſequence—no gentleman of public eſtimation, who had ſufficient talents and honour to juſtify your confidence; but that you muſt look to the verieſt plebeian of the band for a favourite? Of all your infatuations it ſeems to be the moſt extraordinary, that, at a time when it was ſo much your intereſt, in every ſenſe of the word, to make the nation expect the beſt from you, your judgment ſhould be ſo perverted as to adopt the very mode of conduct which made them apprehend the worſt.—If you had applied to Mr. *Fox* you would have had, at leaſt, for your counſellor, a man whom no one has, as yet, deſpiſed;—he may be feared, and hated,—but I doubt much, if there be any mind, of ſuch a giant-ſize, as to feel contempt for that man. You well know, in common with the whole kingdom, that he is no favourite of mine;—nevertheleſs, I do moſt ſolemnly declare it to be my ſerious opinion, that, ſituated as you were, you would have derived more honour in being the dupe of ſuch a man as Mr. *Fox*, than the director of a troop of ſuch characters as Mr. *Sheridan*.

P.

P.

At this time, permit me to inform your Majeſty, that Mr. *Fox* was not in the kingdom, and I waited his return for the proſecution of any political deſign or arrangement on my part,—in the mean time I wanted an agent for inferior purpoſes, and I appointed Mr. *Sheridan* to that office. The arrival of Mr. *Fox* in *England* was attended by a ſevere and incapacitating illneſs, which kept him at a diſtance from my councils; Mr. *Sheridan* therefore continued by my ſide.—

K.

Where I fear he will remain till he becomes a thorn in it.—The ſituation of your Royal Highneſs is by no means more uncommon in courts, than in the inferior ſtations of life.——You wanted a ſervant, and have provided for yourſelf a maſter.—I have the fulleſt conviction in my own mind that Mr. *Fox* would have thought it right, as the *Duke of Portland* has ſince done, to oppoſe your Royal Highneſs when

he thought you wrong.—But, in taking a man to your boſom, whoſe fortune hung upon your favour—who was ſo deeply intereſted to obtain that favour by every, and any means in his power,—who neither poſſeſſed ſufficient influence to reſiſt your wiſhes, when they were to your diſhonour, nor an adequate degree of perſonal conſequence to place himſelf between you and your follies; —you appear to have been governed by no other motive than to attach ſome one to you who would employ the ready verſatility of ſuperior talents in flattering your weakneſſes, gratifying your paſſions, and juſtifying your deviations—not to the world, for the world is not to be duped by ſuch a man, —but to yourſelf.—Let us, however, quit a ſubject which degrades our conference, and come to matters of higher import. I ſhall therefore, without heſitation, aſk of your Royal Highneſs, the predominant reaſon why, the very inſtant there appeared to be a probability of your being called to the government of your country, you ſhould manifeſt an unreſerved averſion to the ſervants whom I had employed, and with whoſe

ſervices

ſervices the country was contented?—Was there any thing conducive to the general proſperity of the nation which you diſcovered to have been neglected by them?—Were they inactive in their duties, or incapable of performing them?—Had the liberty of the ſubject been invaded, or the prerogative of the Crown infringed by their meaſures?—Did trade languiſh?—were the manufacturers without employ, and was the ſail of commerce with-held from the wind, becauſe of their oppreſſive and impolitic arrangements?—Were the treaties, ratified with Foreign Powers, under their adminiſtration, diſadvantageous to the intereſts, or degradatory of the honour of *Great Britain*?—Were the revenues decreaſing, or the burthens of the people augmenting?——Were the individuals who compoſed my government men of deſperate fortunes, and wicked characters, who ſtepped from poverty, or the ſervitude of a gaming-houſe, to riot in the plunder of a public treaſury?—In ſhort, Sir, on looking round the nation, did you find that the people wiſhed you to drive them from the helm, to place your friends and favourites there?

P.

With all poſſible deference to your Majeſty's partiality towards the ſervants of your own appointment, permit me, Sir, juſt to obſerve, without entering into a wide field of argument on the ſubject—that I have the higheſt opinion of the very ſuperior public talents and qualifications of the party which oppoſes the Miniſters who are ſo highly honoured by your Royal favour—It was therefore, not only natural, but neceſſary, for me to call ſuch men to my councils and the adminiſtration of the kingdom, whoſe public and private qualities I ſo greatly admired and eſteemed. — For, I believe, it will not be denied by any one, that a Government muſt be very ill adminiſtered indeed, where the Sovereign Power and the ſubordinate executors of it have no confidence in each other :—And the ſpirit of unreſerved communication which ought to preſide in this conference, obliges me to declare, that your Majeſty's preſent Miniſters would be the laſt perſons in the kingdom with whom I ſhould join in political ſentiment,

ſentiment, or with whom I could form any political coalition.—I do not approve their general ſyſtem of public meaſures :—Beſides, I ſhall not heſitate to acknowledge, that I am by no means inſenſible to the indignity which I ſuffered from you, as I muſt ſuppoſe, by their advice, and the haughty reluctance which they manifeſted, when the public voice called on your Parliament to reſtore me to the ſplendor and independence which belongs to your Eldeſt Son, and the Heir of your Crown.

K.

You are ſtill the dupe of a raſh judgment of your own, or the inſidious miſrepreſentation of others—In the buſineſs to which you allude, and whereof you complain, I am ready to take the whole burthen of the injury and injuſtice upon myſelf. The heſitation to relieve you from the conſequences of an unmeaning, thoughtleſs, and diſgraceful ſpirit of extravagance, did not ariſe from any perſonal backwardneſs in myſelf or others, to overlook the follies of your youth, or to give you an opportunity of convincing the

the world that you had recovered from them—but from the neceſſities of the ſtate. —To relieve the public burthen—to leſſen the national debt, and to reſtore the country to its former ſtate of importance in the eyes of Europe, Economy became the neceſſary, the leading, and the patriotic object of Government.—As the nation was forced to retrench—as the Sovereign was obliged to narrow the limits of his expence, it was thought that you might alſo evince your attention to the public wants and intereſts, by adopting a becoming portion of the general economy.—I perceive, indeed, what I have always ſuſpected, that there is ſomething perſonal in your objection to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.—The unaccommodating ſpirit which he inherits from his father, and is a ſtriking feature in his great public character, may, perhaps, ſo far blend itſelf with his private qualities as to incapacitate him (all political conſiderations apart) for being admitted to the convivialities of *Carlton-houſe*.—He may not have it in his power, or perhaps he might not even poſſeſs the inclination, to render himſelf ſo engaging

to

to your Royal Highneſs as Mr. *Sheridan* or *George Hanger*;—but as a public character he has deſerved well of his country and his Sovereign; and they are both moſt ready, and willing, to acknowledge it. And now, permit me to enquire into your motives for acting, on the late occaſion, in direct oppoſition to the declared wiſhes of the people? It has not been poſſible, I ſhould hope, for any perſons in your confidence, to miſlead, or rather to annihilate, your underſtanding in ſuch a manner as to make you believe that the majority, and a very commanding majority of the nation did not poſſeſs the wiſh that the efficient conduct of Government ſhould continue in thoſe hands wherein I had placed it.

P.

I am by no means diſpoſed to controvert ſuch an opinion. But popularity, as your Majeſty well knows, is of a very uncertain nature:—it riſes with the gale, and he who was followed yeſterday with the loudeſt acclamations, may be hiſſed to-morrow.—But, whatever popular prepoſſeſſion there might

might be in favour of the Adminiſtration, as it ſtood, the ſentiment was very univerſal, and the Houſes of Parliament enforced it by their vote, that I ought not to be reſtrained in the appointment of my political ſervants, had the duration of your Majeſty's indiſpoſition compelled me to enter on the Government of the Kingdom; and, as I have no doubt but the miniſters of my choice would have deſerved popularity, that charm of public men would have been ſoon transferred from the ſervants of your Majeſty's appointment to thoſe of my nomination. Beſides, I am diſpoſed to believe, that the general ſympathy of the nation, with your Majeſty's affliction, operated to cauſe every known partiality of yours to be regarded with peculiar favour by the public, and that the Adminiſtration of the day owes much of its popular conſideration to ſuch a popular ſentiment.

K.

Permit me then to aſk your Royal Highneſs how it happened, that when a nation thus ſympathized with its Sovereign,—you

ſhould ſtand aloof, and be perſuaded not to feel a ſimilar ſympathy with your father.—But I ſhall reſerve what I have to ſay, and the hiſtory of what I have felt on this ſubject, for the concluding part of our converſation; and proceed to requeſt that you will inform me as to the grounds of that popularity which you are pleaſed to believe would have accompanied the firſt official exerciſe of your Miniſters. In recommending you to change the Adminiſtration which I had choſen, and which the people applauded, they muſt, ſurely, have pointed out to you ſome very dangerous defects in the exiſting ſyſtem of Government, and recommended to your approbation ſome general plan of great national advantage, which had been neglected by their predeceſſors, and was to be immediately compleated by them.—Will your Royal Highneſs, for my ſatisfaction, as well as inſtruction, inform me concerning the general ſyſtem of public meaſures which were to poſſeſs the magic power of aſſimilating popularity to your very unpopular party.

P.

It was determined to employ the earlieſt poſſeſſion of power, in producing the Repeal of the Shop-Tax.

K.

I ſhould really ſmile at your ſimplicity, if I did not fear that you were laughing at mine.—But any thing like a ſenſation of merriment would ill become the ſolemnity of this conference. What! could the councils of *Carlton-Houſe* produce nothing of more national concern than a buſineſs ſo trifling, when compared with the primary intereſt of the empire, and which was introduced to the ſolemnity of your deliberations for no other purpoſe than to ſecure, to Mr. *Fox* and his worthy parliamentary colleague, the honour of repreſenting the city of *Weſtminſter*? Were no ſchemes of finance propoſed by *Sheridan*?—Had *Charles Fox* no new arrangements for the adminiſtration of *India*?—Did *Edmund Burke* preſent no plans from *Utopia*, for the good order and economy of your houſehold?—Were there no pro-

jects, for the prosperity of *Ireland*, transmitted to you by Mr. *Grattan*? Were no ideas thrown out for expediting and humanizing the practice of the Law, by the *Chief Justice* of the *Common Pleas*? From whence then—tell me from whence, my dear Prince, did you expect this popularity to proceed, which was to encircle you and your friends, with the brightest blaze of national approbation?

P.

I do not foresee the possibility of contradiction, when I assert that *any* political body or party of men, if the latter term pleases your Majesty better, who should be honoured with the support of the old Whig families of this country, to whom public liberty, and the *House of Brunswick* are so very much indebted, have a natural claim to the respect and confidence of your Majesty and the nation. But this is not the only honourable advantage which belongs to those men with whom I acknowledge myself to be politically connected;—in abilities, in property,

property, and in virtue, I challenge the moſt virulent enemy they have, to point out their equals in the long favoured liſt of the Royal Calendar.

K.

Among the vulgar errors of modern politics, an opinion ſeems to have been eagerly adopted, and artfully diſſeminated, that there are particular families who poſſeſs an *hereditary right* to the favours of the Crown, which is founded on their zeal and activity in forwarding the Revolution, and raiſing the Proteſtant Family of Hanover to the throne of theſe kingdoms. —— Nothing ſurely can be more unreaſonable than to expect, that a King ſhould govern himſelf by rules, which they who preſume to dictate to him continually violate. Wherefore is the Sovereign to be the only perſon in his kingdom who is to be thus faſt bound by ſuch diſtant ties?—If the ſon turns aſide from the path of honour in which his father trod, ought he to poſſeſs his father's reputation, or has he a right to claim his father's friends? —I may diſcover a greater degree of tenderneſs to the errors of a man, on account of

the ſervices performed by his anceſtors; but how great ſoever they may have been, they do not ſurely bind me to ſubmit, with acquieſcence, to perſonal inſults, or to court him who might betray me. Do theſe politicians, who preſcribe ſuch narrow limits for their Sovereign's conduct, realize the ſyſtem they recommend?—In their political courſe, do they not continually deſert the very friends who have elevated them to honour, and placed them in the career of fortune?——I muſt own it wounds me, and I conſider it as a very ſaucy effort of Ariſtocratic inſolence, when it is declared, that the Crown is bound to an hereditary confidence in particular families, at the very time when they quit that demeanour which can alone juſtify their claim upon it. If children degenerate from the principles of their forefathers, they loſe the privileges which the latter poſſeſſed; and a continuation of them would be conſidered as the mark of a weak, inſenſible mind, by the very perſons who caſt their unreflecting, ſilly cenſure, on an oppoſite conduct.——The *Devonſhire* Family, for inſtance, is reſpectable, from its

per-

perſonal influence, as well as private virtue; and its ſupport muſt ever be a deſirable acquiſition to Government. But a Prince would become deſervedly contemptible in the eyes of all his people, who practiſes mean ſubmiſſions to leſſen the power of a party. It is his duty, and real intereſt, to preſerve his dignity; and he muſt not ſink beneath it, to conciliate the political regard and ſupport even of a Duke of *Devonſhire*.

The abilities of Mr. *Fox*, (for as to *Burke* and *Sheridan*, I leave them out of the queſtion,) are of a very tranſcendant nature.—The mild virtues of the *Cavendiſhes* are moſt willingly acknowledged by me; and if both the one and the other could be blended in the ſame perſon, they would form one of the beſt men, as well as the greateſt miniſters, who had ever raiſed the glory of a nation, or elevated the dignity of human nature. But, in their preſent ſtate of ſeparation, how do theſe pre-eminent talents and ſuperior virtues operate? The anſwer, I fear, is too obvious:—to make the beſt ſubſervient to the worſt, and to employ the

good in the wretched buſineſs of giving a colour to the bad. The abilities of Mr. *Fox* —the character of the Houſe of *Cavendiſh*— the name of *Ruſſel*—and the immenſe property of theſe great families, have long formed, and ſtill continue to compoſe, the current cant of your party praters. But the nation is not deceived: the people diſcover neither beauty nor proportion in this mighty Coloſſus, which, under your protection, would beſtride the empire; but conſider it rather as an heterogeneous compoſition of various ſhapes, that muſt produce diſpleaſure to the eye, and apprehenſion in the mind of every one, whom prejudice, neceſſity, or ſomething worſe, have not led to the feet of this miſhapen idol. The property of particular individuals among your friends is very great; but I ſhall venture to aſſert, that the aggregate wealth of thoſe perſons who ſupport the meaſures of Government, is far ſuperior to that of the oppoſite party. But, after all, what is the mere ſolitary poſſeſſion of extenſive property;—and whence does it derive the powerful claim you ſeem to think that it has a right to make on the public

con-

confidence?—Will your Royal Highneſs inform me concerning the ſplendid and patriot munificence of thoſe men, whoſe vaſt incomes, according to your doctrine, ought, in the very recital, to bribe the public into a ſubmiſſive veneration for their poſſeſſors? —Can you tell me of ſcience protected,—of arts encouraged—of merit ſupported—of indigence relieved—of wretchedneſs made happy by your wealthy adherents? Or is their generoſity to be traced only in the ſleek appearance of the barking hounds of faction, the eleemoſynary ſupplies to party retainers, or the ſubſcriptions for ſupporting a *Weſtminſter Election?* When you hint at the popularity that your friends would have poſſeſſed, had they been elevated to power, communicate to me the means by which they would have deſerved to be popular? When you make a boaſt of your Whig families, convince me, I beſeech you, of their Whig principles; and confirm the operative weight of their great property, by examples of that noble, patriotic, and amiable employment of it, which can alone make it the ſource of honourable power.——In the arrange-

rangements of your expected and expecting Adminiſtration, did you propoſe to make a Whig Chancellor, a Whig Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, or a Whig Attorney-General?—And when the Duke of *Portland*, on the firſt appearance of my amendment, expreſſed a determination to proceed no further in your ſervice, did you intend to ſupply his place with a Whig firſt Lord of the Treaſury?—The perſons appropriated to theſe offices, might, every one of them, be zealous Whigs, but they were every one of them *notorious Scotchmen*; and, for that ſole reaſon, had they been employed by me, Mr. *Fox* would not have heſitated a moment to ſet them down as inveterate Tories. Poor *Queenſbury* and *Lothian* were never, I believe, conſidered by any of you as poſſeſſing either common ſenſe or common principle, 'till they became proſelytes to your politics; and they now add two more noble families to the *diſtinguiſhed Whigs* of this country. I am, indeed, extremely concerned to obſerve with what zeal you adopt the jargon of thoſe unmeaning diſtinctions, which are only revived by the emiſ-

emiſſaries, and for the purpoſes, of party and faction. Loyalty and Patriotiſm want no other name or title than their own; and when they are clothed in furtive appellations, you may be aſſured it is for ſome low, lurking view of intereſt or diſhonour. I muſt, however, beg of you not to conclude, that I am inſenſible to the merit of ſome among your Whig connections: it really appears to me, that the ſmall comparative portion of decency and good ſenſe that is obſervable in the conduct of your party, during my calamity, was infuſed into it, by the honour, the dignity, the good underſtanding, and determined reſolution of the *Duke of Portland*.

P.

I am equally ſenſible with your Majeſty, of the ſteady virtue, dignified conduct, and general eſtimation of that Nobleman; and, as an oſtenſible head of a political aſſociation, he muſt be conſidered with no common degree of reſpect; but as a practical engine of Government, in council or in action, I am diſpoſed to look upon his Grace rather as an inferior character.

K.

K.

I moſt ſincerely believe it. The noble Duke has ſomething of a ſturdy virtue about him, which is not always to be overreached; and in the late arrangements of your party, his inflexible honour gave you offence, by oppoſing itſelf to ſome of the moſt raſh and impolitic projects that wicked men could adviſe, or weak men be perſuaded to adopt.

P.

Your Majeſty is pleaſed to expreſs an opinion of very pointed ſeverity; though I truſt it may be in my power to procure a relaxation of it, if you will graciouſly condeſcend to explain the circumſtances which have communicated ſuch an unfavourable ſentiment to your royal breaſt?

K.

When you propoſed, on the expectation of a Regency, to make Mr. *Sheridan* a Cabinet Miniſter, did not the Duke of *Portland* refuſe, in the moſt poſitive manner, to comply with your deſire, as a meaſure which would

would be diſgraceful to your government? But this is not all: I need not inform your Royal Highneſs, that although your debts have been ſo lately diſcharged, an application was intended to be made to Parliament, on your aſſuming the Regency, to diſcharge the enormous incumbrances of a later contraction; and, as if it were thought that your own deficiencies, to the amount of two or three hundred thouſand pounds, were not ſufficient, I am diſpoſed to believe that you were perſuaded to give your conſent to the addition of a fictitious item to the account, which involved the debts of ſeveral of your *ruined* adherents—if that epithet may, with propriety, be applied to men who never poſſeſſed any other fortune than the ſtrange credulity of thoſe who have truſted them. The Duke of *Portland* did not, as he could not reaſonably, object to the opening an unincumbered entrance for you, to the government of your country; which, thanks to the Miniſters whom you were about to diſmiſs from its ſervice, was in a condition freely to afford you the neceſſary relief;—but his Grace acted like an

honeſt man, a ſteady patriot, and your moſt ſincere friend, by oppoſing a meaſure which none but the miſcreants who were to profit by it could adviſe, and muſt have diſgraced you, beyond all expreſſion, in the opinion of the empire. Need I tell you, what, I preſume, the Duke himſelf muſt have felt on the occaſion, that a ſimilar act in a private man would have been liable to all the opprobrium of a ſwindling tranſaction. To have commenced your Regency with ſuch an attempt would have been inauſpicious indeed! For my own part, I cannot conceive that Parliament would have ſubmitted to ſuch an inſult, or that the repreſentative underſtanding of *Great-Britain* could have been perverted into a conſent to vote away the public money to diſcharge, under any form whatever, the debts of certain ſorry perſons, which had been contracted in the worſt manner, for no other reaſon than that your unreflecting and prodigal good nature, to ſay no worſe, had thought proper to rank them with your own. In ſeveral other inſtances that I could name, did the Duke of *Portland* act very much to his own honour, to your ad-

advantage, as well as to the general ſatisfaction; and though it is not a matter of ſurpriſe, it is of real concern to me, that he ſhould not be the moſt reſpected perſon who was ſummoned to the *Councils* of *Carlton Houſe*. You had but one popular man in the whole tribe of your adherents, and the prudent meaſures of his cautious ſuggeſtion are preciſely thoſe which you adopted with the greateſt reluctance. One might almoſt imagine, that ſome Dæmon, a foe to human excellence, had been permitted to exerciſe the ſpirit of perverſion upon you, and to ſuggeſt that ſubſerviency to others, which has diſgraced yourſelf. Policy and nature both made their rightful claims on your underſtanding and your heart; and you appear to have treated both the one and the other with a moſt unjuſtifiable neglect. The former urged you to acquire the eſteem of the people, and the latter invited you to act with all poſſible delicacy and tenderneſs towards your afflicted father. Permit me to aſk you, in what manner you obeyed the dictates of either?

P.

I ſtood in a ſituation unparalelled in the annals of Royalty. Your Majeſty's illneſs had made a chaſm in the conſtitution of your country; and the mode invented by your Miniſters for filling up the breach, was not only in direct oppoſition to my own ſentiments, but to the deliberative opinion of thoſe men whom I conſider as the beſt qualified to adviſe me on any and every occaſion.

K.

It is a common error, in unreflecting men, to miſtake inclination for opinion; and this, perhaps, may have been your caſe on the occaſion, which is now before us. As for your counſellors, they were ready, I doubt not, to give you an opinion of *their* conſtruction, if you were not already provided with one of your own: or, ſhould you have determined for yourſelf in the buſineſs, which, however, I do not much ſuſpect, their ready complaiſance would have ſhaped

their

their plaſtic ſentiments according to the model they had found in your inclination. The meaſures propoſed by my Miniſters to ſupply the affecting abſence of the Executive power, were approved by the general voice of the people: The Houſe of Commons, by a very conſiderable majority, confirmed the national ſentiment: The Houſe of Peers coincided with, and aided the work of the Commons. All that is, and all that will be, great in the Law, added a very powerful ſanction to the miniſterial arrangements. Theſe poſitions cannot, with any colour of truth, be denied by you; and I wiſh it could be diſbelieved by me, that you, with your political cohort, oppoſed yourſelves, in ſettling the conſtitution, to the opinion of the Law, the votes of both Houſes of Parliament—and the nation.—Nay, it is impoſſible for me not to obſerve that the *Genius* of your party was foiled in the bold efforts made to give you rights to which no claim could be diſcovered, but in the volume of his ambition. He was told that the new-fangled doctrine advanced, on the occaſion, was High Treaſon to the Conſtitution; and,

the following day, he thought it expedient to retract his unconſtitutional opinion by a ſkilful explanation of the words which he had employed to convey it.

P.

Your Majeſty is pleaſed to tell me, that I have acted in direct oppoſition to ſound policy,—and that I have reſiſted nature in her dictates of filial duty. Such opinions, though they may proceed from a miſconception of your mind, affect me with a very painful concern; nevertheleſs, a ſuperior mortification waits on the idea, that I am nothing better than the dupe of artful, wicked, and inſidious men; a ſpring to ſupply their wants,—the ladder of their ambition, and, in ſhort, the mere Automaton of a party.

K.

To be conſidered as a dupe, in any ſtation of life, is a very mortifying circumſtance to a ſenſible mind: but, with reſpect to yourſelf, there is no alternative. I muſt either look upon your Royal Highneſs as the

*Head* or the *Engine* of your party; and, when I conſider the men of which it is compoſed, the nature of its conduct, and the objects to which it directs all its endeavours, I name you to the better office, in deſcribing you as the Executor, rather than the Director of their meaſures.

P.

In the late very ſingular poſition of the nation and myſelf, I adviſed with thoſe men, of whoſe wiſdom, integrity, and experience I poſſeſſed the moſt decided opinion; and, in forming thoſe arrangements which they propoſed, and I myſelf approved,—permit me to ſay, that I was no more a dupe to them, than your Majeſty has ever been to your own Cabinet Council, whenever you have given your aſſent to their reſolutions.

K

I ſhall not ſtay to argue upon the diſtinction between a body of men in high office, bound by oath, and accountable to their country,—and a private, ſelect meeting of your partizans, called together for

your purpoſes, and accountable to no one: —but ſhall proceed to offer my ſentiments on a certain act of your privy counſellors, which they perſuaded you to adopt as your own: I mean, the letter written in your name, and with your conſent; but I am inclined to believe, without any further interference on your part, to Mr. *Pitt*. Such is the nature, tendency, and object, of this artful epiſtle, that I would rather hear you acknowledge an unreflecting adoption of it, than the mature approbation of its principles and intentions. The dupes of bad men may, from various reaſons, be objects of pity; but he who poſſeſſes a knowledge of their deſigns, and avowedly aids their progreſs to maturity, is involved in their guilt, and merits a ſhare of the puniſhment due to it. This important letter of your embryo Miniſters, while it inſults the Parliament, the people, the Queen, and myſelf, is a moſt inſidious contrivance to impoſe upon you. It mentions Parliament as ſubſervient to a Miniſter—it conſiders the meaſures framed by the Privy Council as injurious to the people, who were ſo very ignorant of their

true intereſt, as to be perfectly ſatisfied with them. The ſeverity, with which the deſign of inveſting the Queen with the care of my afflicted State and the management of my Houſehold is treated, implies a very unjuſt and unfeeling accuſation of your Mother—but this is not all—the conſulting framers of this letter, in direct oppoſition to their own private opinion, took upon them to aſſert, that the meaſures purſued by my Miniſters were ſuch as would, on the recovery of my underſtanding, be followed with my vindictive diſapprobation.—They well knew when they were contriving a period to that purpoſe, that they were forging a falſehood: and I am now in a ſtate, thank Heaven! to prove the effrontery of their conduct, by declaring the moſt unreſerved and grateful approbation of all my Miniſters have done for me and my people. But this letter was not written to form any part of a ſecret correſpondence between your Royal Highneſs and Mr. *Pitt*; it was compoſed with a view to future publication; and it was publiſhed for three important purpoſes —Firſt, It contained the language of com-

plaint from the Heir Apparent of the Empire; and your friends expected that a generous people would be affected by it, and manifeſt ſome public diſpoſition in your favour. Secondly, It was thought to contain a power of producing an attractive effect on certain wavering Members of Parliament —and, Thirdly, by making your condemnation of Mr. *Pitt* and his meaſures ſo notorious, you were fixed in a political dependance on the oppoſite party:—thus you announced yourſelf the princely engine of their arts, of their ambition, and their reſentment; and while they perſuaded you that they were exerting themſelves for your honour, and the principles of the Conſtitution, their only views were to the emoluments and plunder of thoſe offices, which they hoped and expected you would ſoon be in a capacity to beſtow upon them. But this letter did your friends no ſervice, and yourſelf no honour: it did not dupe the people—it did not influence Parliament—but it impoſed a binding obligation upon you. This was a moment, Sir, of all others, when you ſhould have been broad awake

awake to the circumſtances around you;—and it was at this moment that you appear to have ſlumbered over your beſt intereſts, and to be vigilant only in the degrading efforts of party zeal and reſentment. The idle, ridiculous inconſiſtency of repreſenting Mr. *Pitt* as your competitor for power, was adopted and foſtered by you; and your *Brother of York* was taught to enliven the prattle of his Parliamentary dinners with deſcribing the ſtruggle between your friends and the Conſtitution, as a perſonal conteſt between your Royal Highneſs and Mr. *Pitt*. In ſhort, it appears to me, that your own conduct was *perſonally* wrong, and that of your adherents *politically* wrong in every inſtance that has come to my knowledge.

P.

If it were poſſible that there could be a judge, an impartial judge, between your Majeſty and myſelf, he would not, I believe, heſitate to pronounce, that your political attachments and prejudices were as warm and as zealous as mine:—but ſurely, Sir, you do not conſider your Miniſter to

be ſo infallible, as to make his political conduct the ſole ſtandard of what is politically right; nor can you, I ſhould preſume, be ſo unjuſt, as to throw into one maſs of condemnation the numbers who are bold enough to differ from him. If that ſhould be your royal diſpoſition, I ſhall add another article to the chapter of my diſgrace, by declaring, that I hold myſelf hoſtile to his political principles—that I neither approve of him as a Miniſter, or eſteem him as a man, and that I ſhall continue to give my poor unavailing ſupport to thoſe men who oppoſe him. If your Majeſty's gracious protection, ſtrengthened by the circumſtances of the times, makes him omnipotent, I and my friends muſt content ourſelves with ſubmitting to his ſuperior fortune; but permit me, Sir, to declare, that we ſhall watch him in his progreſs; and I truſt that your Majeſty will live to ſee this towering eagle, who aims to breaſt the ſun, brought down to the earth.

K.

I have nothing to do at preſent, with what may happen in future. If the Miniſter turns

turns aſide from the path of honourable ambition—if he grows careleſs of preſerving the character he has acquired—if he ſhould be ſo perverted, as to change the gratitude for the vengeance of his country, I ſhall not, believe me, throw the royal mantle around him for his protection. But, Sir, in the opinion of his King, of his Country, and of Europe, he has hitherto been, and at preſent is, a great and good Miniſter; and the injuſtice of my anticipating a lapſe of his public character, could be equalled only by the folly of expecting, that, when he loſt his virtue, *your friends would find it*. I am ſorry to obſerve, that the eſteem of the people does not appear to be an object of ſerious conſideration to you; and it can ariſe only from your own inattention to popular regard, that you ſeem to think it adds no dignity to thoſe who poſſeſs it. You have certainly laughed at appearances from your firſt entrance into public life; and you are habituated to the game. It is not an eaſy thing for the Heir apparent of the Britiſh Crown to make himſelf unpopular among the Britiſh people; but this is a difficulty

which you have effectually ſurmounted;—and the nation is not more rejoiced at my recovery, from affection to my perſon, than the being freed, by that event, from the apprehenſion of ſuch a Miniſtry as you had prepared to govern them.

P.

But let me intreat your Majeſty, whatever your opinion may be of the men whom I ſhould have named as my political ſervants, to ſuppoſe that they had, at leaſt, underſtanding ſufficient to purſue their own intereſts, which they could not have done, if they acted in oppoſition to the general intereſt of the nation.

K.

How happened it then, that, in the very outſet of your new career, the Duke of *Portland* thought your attentions to the intereſts of ſome of your favourites carried ſo far, that he felt it his duty to oppoſe them? —And if they could perſuade you to enter into ſuch arrangements for their advantage, while heſitation hovered over the proceedings of

of the nation, what would they not have provided for themſelves, when the whole patronage of the Government had been in the poſſeſſion of their eaſy protector?—— Your Royal Highneſs had an opportunity of doing every thing you ought, without yielding up any thing that you might wiſh. It was in your power to have eſtabliſhed yourſelf in the hearts of the people—to have called forth the applauſe of ſurrounding nations—to have preſerved the country from confuſion—to have gratified your own private wiſhes, in gratifying thoſe of your party—and to have prevented ſuch a conference as this, from wearing, on my part, the colour of reproach. All theſe advantages were in your power, and you rejected them all; nor can I trace your infatuation to any other cauſe, but the eager ambition and hungry neceſſities of your favourites, which had inſpired them with the power to turn your mind from any view of your real honour, in order to come at once to their gratifications.

P.

I really cannot deny, Sir, that if all this could have been done, I muſt have been blind indeed:—ſuch a picture as your Majeſty has juſt deſcribed was never viſible to my mind—

K.

I will explain myſelf. When I was deprived by Heaven of the capacity to govern my kingdom, and the nation looked to a Regency, which was to be veſted in you, your Royal Highneſs would have done well to have ſummoned the leading perſons of your political party to your preſence, and addreſſed them to the following purport—

" I poſſeſs a very confidential regard for " you all; and I acknowledge perſonal " obligations to many of you. As a proof " of my ſincerity and my gratitude, I have " requeſted your attendance, in order to " unfold my mind to you, on the preſent " very extraordinary and affecting criſis; " and to explain to you the conduct I mean " to purſue, as well as the manner in which " I propoſe to ſuit myſelf to the awful cir-

" cumſtances

" cumſtances of the moment. From the
" confirmed habits of friendly communica-
" tion between us—the attachment you
" have ever ſhewn to me—my known opi-
" nion of your talents and principles, as
" well as the ſolemn pledge I have given of
" elevating you to the Adminiſtration of
" this kingdom, whenever I ſhould poſſeſs
" the Crown—I ſay, from theſe circum-
" ſtances you might be induced, perhaps, to
" expect, that I ſhall employ the firſt mo-
" ments of the regent power in calling you
" to my Councils: but, I flatter myſelf,
" when you have heard my reaſons, there
" will not be one of you diſpoſed to con-
" demn my purpoſe of delaying a meaſure,
" which it will be my happineſs to ſeize
" the firſt proper and ſuitable opportunity
" of compleating. I feel myſelf in a very
" ſerious predicament. Our Sovereign is
" at preſent deprived of the capacity to
" govern his kingdoms: how long the ca-
" lamity may laſt, Heaven only knows:—
" we are, however, informed, by the firſt
" medical profeſſors—that his Majeſty is in
" a recoverable ſtate: while, therefore, re-

" covery

" covery is poſſible, I ſhall make no change
" in the government of the country. I
" propoſe to communicate my intention to
" both Houſes of Parliament, to receive
" with all readineſs the regent power from
" their conſtitutional hands, as they ſhall,
" in their wiſdom, ſhape and controul it;
" and I intend to exerciſe it as the mere
" vice-gerent of the afflicted monarch. I
" ſhall continue his ſervants as he left them,
" and purſue the general plan of govern-
" ment, to which he had ſet the ſeal of his
" approbation, while he poſſeſſed the fa-
" culty to approve. Such a mode of pro-
" ceeding is, I think, conformable to the
" delicacy which I, in a very particular
" manner, am bound to ſhew to the afflicted
" ſtate of my father: ſuch a reſolution will,
" I believe, meet with the applauſe of the
" nation; and I doubt not will receive the
" warmeſt approbation of the King, when
" his reſtored reaſon ſhall qualify him to
" judge of my conduct. But if it ſhould
" pleaſe Heaven to give a deadly wound to
" the underſtanding of the Sovereign, I
" ſhall not think myſelf bound any longer

" to

" to purſue the preſent ſyſtem of govern-
" ment. When his body is become the
" tomb of his mind, I ſhall act as if the
" King himſelf repoſed in the royal ſepul-
" chre. Having thus, in all things, per-
" formed my duty to my father, and ſatis-
" fied the affections of the people, I ſhall
" do juſtice to myſelf, by fulfilling my en-
" gagements to you. In the mean time,
" my friends, I intreat you to exerciſe mo-
" deration in every thing—to ſtrengthen,
" rather than interrupt, the proceedings of
" Government, and to promote, as much
" as poſſible, a general unanimity, during
" the awful ſuſpenſe of the nation. I well
" know, that the prodigality and diſſipations
" of my life have leſſened me in the eſteem
" of the people; but, I truſt, that the con-
" duct I have juſt declared it to be my in-
" tention to purſue, will conciliate ſuch a
" degree of popular favour, as will enable
" me, when the proper period arrives, to
" execute all my intentions with eaſe to
" myſelf, without complaint from the pub-
" lic, and with advantage to you. Con-
" ſider, my friends, if I ſhould call you to

" the

" the helm at this moment, what hazard
" and diſadvantage we ſhould have to en-
" counter.—From the preſent temper of
" Parliament and the people, I doubt very
" much, whether the utmoſt exertions of
" my power would be able to maintain you
" in your ſituations. At all events, if the
" King ſhould recover, and the Royal Phy-
" ſicians have by no means diſcouraged the
" expectation, you would be inſtantly diſ-
" miſſed from office—the national outcry
" would be againſt us all, for the wanton
" expence of an unneceſſary, ill-timed
" change of Adminiſtration — the public
" mockery would follow us—and the po-
" pular party would return to power, under
" ſuch a ſtrong protection of the Sovereign
" and the people, as would leave your hopes
" no other foundation than an event, which
" it does not become me to mention. I
" ſhall act as nature and policy dictate;
" and I truſt that you will co-operate with
" me. Such are the communications I re-
" queſted your attendance to receive; and
" I have too high an opinion of your un-
" derſtanding, too firm a confidence in

" your

" your public zeal, and too ſincere a per-
" ſuaſion of your regard for me to doubt of
" your approbation."

Such a conduct as this would have elevated you to an height which, I fear, your paſſions and your friends will never ſuffer you to attain:—It would have wiped off, at once, all reproach from your name;—it would have made you the idol of the Britiſh people, and the admiration of Europe;—it would have ſoftened the ſorrows of your mother, and conſoled the nation for the affliction of their king.—But wherefore, alas!—am I forced to quit this bright picture of imagination, for the dreary ſcene of fact and reality?—Why, my ſon, have you compelled me to repreſent the ſtriking reverſe of ſo much virtue?——In a very early ſtage of my diſorder you encouraged the party in oppoſition to my government, to expect every thing from you;—and, no ſooner was the ſignal given, than all their arts were let looſe upon the nation.—Their firſt attack was againſt the conſtitution itſelf; but the watchmen of the ſtate were vigi-

lant, and fruſtrated the enterprize.—Other devices were then to be employed;—and every miſerable practice of an election-canvas was ſet in motion.—You were made to diſplay all the decoration of your perſuaſive manners, and to give ſuperb entertainments at *Carlton-Houſe* to the leaders of your party, while its inferior perſonages were conſigned to his Highneſs of *York*, who forgot his loſſes at the Tennis-court, in promoting the bribery of good dinners and convivial intemperance.—But theſe endeavours did not find the expected ſucceſs, and other means were employed to obtain it.—The Miniſters were accuſed of a moſt daring ambition,—their meaſures were repreſented as hoſtile to the conſtitution,—and a mockery was made of their loyal ſorrows.—But the worſt is yet to come.—In a daily Newſpaper, which is known to be devoted to your party, and under the immediate influence of your favourite adherents, an attack, to which I cannot give a name, was made upon the *Queen* your Mother, which I have read with tears of agony and aſtoniſhment.——As to myſelf, I was declared by your familiar

familiar friends, in terms of merriment, and jovial expectation, to be in a ſtate of which there were no hopes. The Phyſicians who doubted moſt of my recovery were moſt careſſed by your party,—while *Doctor Willis*, whoſe care, ſkill and experience, have been ſo conducive to my cure, was examined, by certain perſons of your Committee, with an apparent view to betray him; and, when his integrity ſurmounted every effort to perplex his mind, he was denominated, by one of your own orators, an Empiric, and a Mountebank—and threatened with vengeance.

P.

Before the warmth of your Majeſty's temper riſes to an height which might debar me from replying to you, permit me to obſerve, that I do not hold myſelf anſwerable for the unreflecting violence, and erring zeal, of party-men. — The Preſs is become very licentious,—I have, myſelf, been the continual object of its ſeverity, and the means of reſtraining it, are not poſſeſſed by me.

K.

And will your Royal Highneſs condeſcend to practiſe an evaſion ſo degrading to you? —Will you ſeriouſly tell me that you could not have curbed, if it had ſo pleaſed you, the impetuous conduct of your friends?— Whatever they have done was from a deſire to correſpond with your wiſhes, and to aid the general plan, which it was the ambition of your party to complete.—You well know that your Royal Highneſs was, at leaſt, the oſtenſible Polar-ſtar by which your adherents directed their unpropitious courſe.—Will you, Sir, venture to aſſert your belief that the Morning Herald could have been influenced to traduce the Queen, if it had not been with a view to ſome political regulation, which it was your avowed wiſh either to ſupport or prevent.—I will not ſay that you were originally privy to this effrontery of your confidential people,—but I do not know that you requeſted Mr. *Sheridan* to check the literary zeal of his myrmidons, or that they received a frown of diſapprobation from you, for having com-

mitted ſuch unparalleled inſolence. Nay, Sir, permit me to aſk you, whether it was not by your conſent, if not by your command, that a *menial officer* of your *kitchen* became the proprietor of a newſpaper, which has ſince been devoted to the miſerable purpoſes of faction: and, at this moment, when my recovery has been declared in Parliament, and is known to yourſelf, is not that paper encouraged to expreſs its doubts of the event, and to diſſeminate its pretended incredulity through every part of the kingdom.

*Qui facit per alterum, facit per ſe.*

And I ſhall not heſitate to lay all the reproach of the *confidential Weltjee*'s conduct at his door from whom it originates——That you have acted in oppoſition to every principle of good policy,—and ſinned againſt the beſt feelings of natural affection, is in proof before you. It is too apparent that you have failed in your duty, as a ſubject, to your Sovereign, and of a child to his parent.—If you poſſeſſed the common ſenſibility of a good heart, the calamity that befell me would have brought you to that compo-

ſure of mind, and ſobriety of demeanour which affliction never fails to produce in well-diſpoſed and virtuous characters.—If your underſtanding had not been influenced by the ſubtle ſpells of the bad men about you, it could not have been poſſible for you to have diſplayed a public inattention to my unhappy ſituation.—If your Royal Highneſs had not been thus perverted, you would not, during my illneſs, have been ſeen intoxicated at an Opera,—or reeling into a Gaming-houſe, — or preſiding at petty clubs and convivial aſſociations, where your appearance, at any time, would have been folly, and, at this time, was a crime. I may, perhaps, intrude upon your *ſerious* thoughts, by hinting at the claims which *Religion* has upon you, as a ſource of private benefit and public example:—But ſurely, my dear Prince, it would have been no imputation to your underſtanding, or your heart,—if, when the whole kingdom was engaged in addreſſing heaven for my recovery, you had appeared at ſome place of public worſhip, and joined in the national ſupplication.—Your *good brother of York*

might alſo make amends for his follies of the week, by a right employment of the Sabbath, inſtead of ſcandaliſing the inhabitants of *London*, by a Sunday review of his regiment in *Hyde-Park*. I do not charge either of you with perſonal harſhneſs to the Queen; nevertheleſs, from the very earneſt and anxious manner in which ſhe ſpeaks of your reſpectful attention to her, and ſome other ſuſpicious circumſtances, I apprehend that, in her deepeſt affliction, ſhe received little conſolation from her ſons. As for your ſuppoſed marriage, and the means you employed, whatever they might be, to ſatisfy the conſcience of a vain and ſilly woman, I ſhall ſay but little: ſhe alone can be the victim of your deception; for the country is alarmed on the occaſion, and will not be deceived: the jealouſy of the national church is alſo awakened, and forms a barrier of ſtatutes, which the moſt deſperate of your friends will not adviſe you to attack.—— As for myſelf, it becomes me to ſubmit to the power which knows when to give, and when to take away; and to that power my moſt grateful thanks are due. On awaking

from my delirium, I find myſelf the object of inexpreſſible loyalty from my people; I perceive that my rights, while I was inſenſible to them, were ſupported with firmneſs, dignity, and affection, by the two remaining parts of the Conſtitution. It does not appear, that any material inconvenience has ariſen to the country from my abſence; and on my return, I find it in proſperity and exultation, and its affairs under the guidance of able men and an *uncorrupt Parliament*: for no one will perſuade me that the Parliament was corrupt, which ſupported a *fallen King and a falling Miniſter*, againſt the riſing ſun of the Empire. It is not, however, to be expected, that my joy on this happy occaſion ſhould be free from alloy. I have my ſorrow; but it is not for myſelf—it is for my people—it is not that I have been deſerted in my utmoſt need by thoſe my former bounty fed: in ſhort, I ſhall leave your Royal Highneſs to conjecture from whence proceeds the only anxiety of my breaſt.

P.

Whatever, Sir, may have been my errors —whatever they, at this moment, may be —what

—whatever difference of political opinion may ſubſiſt between your Majeſty and me—there is not a ſubject in your Empire who felt a more ardent and ſincere joy than myſelf, on the propitious event of your recovery.

K.

To deal plainly with you—though I do not deny your ſatisfaction, I have ſome doubts as to the real cauſe of it. In ſhort, it is not perfectly clear to my mind, whether your joy proceeds from filial love, patriot duty, or the having eſcaped from a ſituation, which was ſurrounded with dilemmas and difficulties, and from whence you have good reaſon to apprehend that you would not have been extricated, without diſhonour to yourſelf, and, perhaps, confuſion to the country.

P.

Then, Sir, this miſerable alternative only remains between us:—you are unjuſt, or I am the moſt depraved of mankind.

K.

K.

I feel it a very painful taſk to juſtify myſelf againſt your charge of injuſtice, to which, in this inſtance, I ſhould rejoice to plead guilty;—but ſo it is.—Your Royal Highneſs lives not in a cloſet; you mingle as much with the world as any other man, and are acquainted with all that is paſſing in it. You muſt know, that the very men who are your favourite friends, are my perſonal enemies; and that my underſtanding, my amuſements, my defects—the every part of my private, as well as public life, form, more or leſs, a theme for their wit, their ridicule, their ſatire, and their contempt. Do not their Newſpaper Editors — their ſcribblers and their poets tell you this?—Alas! you know it all;—yet theſe are the men you take to your boſom.——If it were to be aſked, in any public aſſembly whatever, who is the perſon, in *Great Britain*, the moſt afflicted at my recovery?—would not the univerſal voice return the name of *Sheridan*?—and he is the man to whoſe breaſt you truſt your ſecret thoughts, whom you

you elevate to the moſt familiar ſociety, and to whoſe benignant care, if it were in your power, you would conſign the government of the Empire. In ſhort, Sir, have you not found your favourites and Miniſters, where *Nero* would have looked for buffoons, and *Catiline* for conſpirators? —Alas! are not theſe things ſo?—and, if they are, what injuſtice is there in the ſuſpicions I entertain of your underſtanding or your heart?—even if I were to add, that the one is perverted, and the other depraved, who will tell me that I ſin againſt the truth?—— There remains but little more for me to ſay. I have converſed with you as a Sovereign—I have reaſoned with you as a Father—I ſhall now conclude this conference with adviſing you as a Friend. The preſent moment offers a very fair opportunity of redeeming your life: you are yet young enough to recover from your paſt errors; and your underſtanding is more than equal to the right conduct of yourſelf, if you will but let it go alone, and emancipate it from the nurſing hands of thoſe, whoſe intereſt it is to keep it in ſwaddling-clothes of their own contriving.

If

If you believe that your party are your perſonal friends—that their apparent zeal for what they call your intereſts, ariſes from any other motives but to promote their own ;—if you think that they do not ſhake their heads in private at your conduct and character, you are in a very grievous error. How can you ſuppoſe, for a moment, that men who have been ungrateful to me, if it ſhall anſwer their purpoſe, will not be ungrateful to you ?—or that they will govern themſelves by a principle of rectitude in their conduct towards you, which they diſdain in all their tranſactions with mankind. By what infatuation is it that you look for faithful ſervice and affectionate zeal from men, whom the gaming table ſupports with the luxuries, and no tradeſman will truſt with the neceſſaries of life. Let me exhort you to turn your back on *Circe* and her crew, and join the votaries of virtue. Give dignity to your character, œconomy to your affairs, and ſplendor to your life. Return to the boſom of your family—add your portion to the domeſtic felicity of thoſe who call you their ſon. Throw your frowns at faction—

faction—ſtrengthen, by your co-operation, the meaſures of Government, and no longer diſdain the affection of the people. Check the ardour, and change the nature of your pleaſures: call the wiſeſt and beſt men of the kingdom about you. Encourage art, be the patron of ſcience, and beckon virtue to your protection. Let every part of your conduct compoſe an aſſured omen of all that is great and good in the character of a Monarch: ſo that the riſing generation may exult in the hope that they ſhall enjoy the glories of your reign, and the aged patriot expreſs his ſole regret that he ſhall not live to behold them.——In ſhort, ſo conform *your* life to honour, that I may end *mine* in peace.* * * * * * * * * * * *

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W.

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